

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3145

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USDOC

SINGAPORE FOR USRTC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, TH, MY

SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL FISHERIES TRADE MISSION AUGUST 13-27, 1976

REF: STATE 089362

1. AFTER CONSULTING WITH GOM AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR FISHERIES AND WITH SELECTED END-USERS, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT ONLY TWO FIRMS MENTIONED REFTTEL, HERZOG HART (FISH FARMING) AND CAMPBELL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMPBOATS OVER 120 FEET) UNLIKELY TO FIND READY MARKET DURING VISIT. IN CASE OF FISH FARMING, INDUSTRY NOT YET ADVANCED ENOUGH TO OFFER SALES PROSPECTS FOR AMERICAN FIRMS. WITH REGARD TO SHRIMP BOATS OF THIS SIZE, THEY ARE ONLY USED IN EAS MALAYSIA AND CHANCES OF ATTRACTING BUYERS TO COME TO KUALA LUMPUR APPEAR SLIM.

2. IN ADDITION, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SOME CONSIDERATION OUGHT TO BE GIVEN TO DROPPING PENANG AS MISSION STOP. WHILE PENANG IS CENTER OF WHATEVER MODERN PRIVATE FISHING INTERESTS EXIST IN MALAYSIA, COMPANIES IN THAT CITY HAVE BEEN VERY CONSERVATIVE IN RECENT MONTHS AND INDUSTRY SOURCES INDICATE THIS ATTITUDE UNLIKELY TO CHANGE SOON. THIS DUE TO THEIR DOUBTS ABOUT LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF FISHING GROUNDS IN MELAKA STRAITS AND TO GOM SUPPORT OF PRIVATE SECTOR ON PENINSULAR'S WEST COAST. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE NOT REALLY MODERNIZING THEIR
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EQUIPMENT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT FASHION. PLEASE ADVISE.

3. ACTION FOCUS OF FISHERIES INDUSTRY IN MALAYSIA TODAY RESTS WITH GOM, PARTICULARLY FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FDA) LOCATED IN KUALA LUMPUR. THIS ENTITY SET UP TO ENCOURAGE FISHERIES INDUSTRY, ESPECIALLY ON EAST COAST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMALLY ADVISED THAT THEY WILL BE SPENDING LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY ON EQUIPMENT IN THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN WHICH WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY. THEY ARE PRESENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR LOAN TO PURCHASE UP TO 150 NEW TRAWLERS TO BE CONSTRUCTED LOCALLY. ALL OF THESE VESSELS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MODERN GEAR.

4. FDA IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN U.S. PURSE SEINE TECHNOLOGY. FIRMS OFFERING THIS TECHNOLOGY, ESPECIALLY IN AREA OF TUNA FISHING, WILL FIND READY INTEREST IN THEIR PRODUCT. IN ADDITION, GOM HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS FROM FISHERMEN ABOUT HIGH COST AND LOW QUALITY OF NETS PRODUCED IN MALAYSIA BY JAPANESE COMPANY WHICH PROTECTED BY HIGH TARIFFS. GOM REPORTEDLY LOOKING FOR OTHER SOURCES FOR NETS.
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